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THE  
CASE  
OF THE  
Royal African Company  
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*Africa* - Royal African Company.

OF

E N G L A N D.

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*Non minor est virtus, quam querere, parta tueri.*

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L O N D O N :

Printed by SAM. ARIS, in *Creed-Lane.*

M. DCC. XXX.



THE  
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THE  
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OF THE  
Royal African Company  
OF  
ENGLAND.



HE *Portuguese* being the first that discovered the Coast of *Africa*, they built one Fort on the Island of *Arguin*, on the *North Coast*, another call'd *St. George del Mina* on the *Gold Coast*, and a third at a Place called *Loango St. Pauls* on the Coast of *Angola*, to the Southward of the Equinoctial Line; by virtue of which Possessions they not only claimed, and for many Years en-



joyed the Right in and to all the said Lands and Countries, but likewise seized and confiscated the Ships of all other Nations, as often as they found any of them trading on any Part of the said Coast.

ABOUT the latter End of the Reign of King *Edward VI.* some *London* Merchants fitted out the first *English* Ships that ever traded to *Guinea*; and in the Reign of Queen *Mary*, and for the first ten or twelve Years of Queen *Elizabeth*, fundry other private Ships were fitted out for the same Parts: But the *English* not having as yet any *Settlements* or *Plantations* in the *West Indies*, and consequently no Occasion for Negroes, such Ships traded only for *Gold*, *Elephants Teeth*, and *Malaguetta*, and all such Voyages were undertaken and performed at the Hazard of losing the Ships and Cargoes, if they fell into the Hands of the *Portuguese*, without the least Ground to hope for any Redress or Satisfaction for the same.

QUEEN *Elizabeth*, in the Thirtieth Year of her Reign, being then at War with *Spain* and *Portugal*, erected a Company, for the better discovering and carrying on a Trade from the Northermost Part of the River *Senegal*, and from and within that River, all along that Coast, unto the Southermost Part of the River *Gambia*, and within the same; and gave and granted unto them the whole and sole Trade, in, to, and from the said Rivers and Countries, for a certain Term of Years; with Prohibition to all others her Subjects to trade to the same Places, on Pain of Forfeiture of Ships and Goods: And these



these were the first *English* Merchants that ever traded to the Coast of *Guinea*, by and under the Authority and Protection of the Crown of *England*.

IN the Reigns of *James I.* and *Charles I.* and during the Time of the Usurpation, fundry Persons were encouraged by publick Authority to trade to other Parts of *Africa*, and to take such Measures for the better carrying on and improving the same as they should judge most proper. In pursuance whereof, they built one Fort, at a Place called *Cormantine*, on the *Gold Coast*, and another in the River *Gambia*, on the North Coast; and these were the only Places of any Consequence which the *English* were in Possession of at the Restauration.

THE States General of the United Provinces observing, as we may imagine, the Measures taken in *England* for encouraging of a Trade to *Africa*, did also, about the Year 1621, erect and establish a Company, which they called the *West-India Company*; and, for their Encouragement, gave and granted unto them all the Lands and Countries which they could conquer or gain Possession of in *Africa*, from the *Tropick of Cancer* to the *Cape of Good Hope*; and in *America*, from the Southermost Part of *Newfoundland* to the Streights of *Magellan* and *La Maire* on the East Side, and from those Streights to the Streights of *Anian* on the West Side, with the whole and sole Trade, and Liberty and Right of trading into and from all such Lands and Countries; and also



also with Prohibition to all others their Subjects to trade to or frequent them, or any of them, under the severest Penalties. Whereupon the said Company applied themselves to the making of sundry great and important Conquests in *Brasil* and *Africa*: And such Success attended their Arms, especially in *Africa*, that in the Year 1637. they took the strong Fortrefs of *St. George del Mina*, on the *Gold Coast*; and in a Year or two more, all the other *Portuguese* Forts and Settlements on the same Coast; all which Places were afterwards yielded to them by the Treaty of Truce and Navigation concluded, *Anno* 1641. between the Crown of *Portugal* and the States.

FROM this Time, and in vertue of these Possessions, thus taken from and yielded by the *Portuguese*, the *Dutch West-India* Company took upon themselves to claim the sole Right and Property in and to all the Lands and Countries in *Africa*, from *Cape Palmas* to *Cape Lopez*, comprehending all the *Gold Coast*, and *Whydah*, and sundry other great and populous Countries on each Side of them. And although the *English* had built a Fort at *Cormantine*, and settled Factories at sundry other Places on the *Gold Coast* before the *Dutch* had made the said Conquests, and had therefore as good a Right and Title as themselves to a free Trade at all Places on the same Coast, not in their actual Possession or Occupation, yet nevertheless from this Time forward the said *Dutch West-India* Company always kept one or two Cruizers on the said Coast, whose  
chief



chief Business was to watch all such *English* Ships as came to trade there, and to follow them from Place to Place, and either to lie between them and the Shore, and *intercept* their Trade with the Natives, or to *frighten* them off the Coast, and ruin their Voyages, or to *seize* and *carry* them to *St. George del Mina*; and this not only when such Ships were found trading on the *Gold Coast*, and at Places near any of the said *Dutch* Company's Forts and Settlements, but also at Places several Hundreds of Miles distant from them.

KING *Charles II.* soon after his Restauration, being made acquainted with the *dangerous* and *precarious State and Condition*, to which the Trade of his Subjects in those Parts was thus reduced, and having likewise received many *Complaints* touching the *Interruptions* given to, and *Depredations* committed upon the *Ships* of this Nation by the *Dutch West-India* Company on the Coast of *Africa*, it became necessary to consider not only of a proper Method for protecting and securing the said Trade for the future, but likewise how and in what Manner *Reparation* might be obtained for such *Damages* and *Depredations*.

FOR the first, it being now evident that the single and separate Endeavours of private *English* Merchants were by no means sufficient to contend with the united Power and Interest of the said *Dutch West-India* Company in those Parts of the World, and the *English* having found by former Experience in the *East Indies* what little Stress was to be laid  
on



on any Treaty that might be concluded between the two Nations in *Europe*, for the Security of such a distant Branch of our Trade, The only Choice which his Majesty had left for maintaining and defending the *Right* of his Subjects to a *free* and *unmolested Trade* in *Africa*, against the *Pretensions* and *Encroachments* of such a *Rival*, was to *incorporate* and *unite* such of his own Subjects as should be willing to engage in the said Trade into one Body, and to give and grant unto them such Powers, Privileges, and Encouragements, as the Circumstances of the Trade at that Time required; which was accordingly done by Letters Patents under the Great Seal of *England*, bearing Date the Tenth Day of *January*, 1662. and the said united Body of *English* Merchants was called *the Company of Royal Adventurers of England trading into Africa*.

As to the Second, his Majesty was pleased to cause a particular Account of the Damages complained of to be drawn up, and transmitted to his Envoy at the *Hague*, with Orders to demand and insist upon full Reparation for the same. And, for the better *protecting* of the *New Company*, it was likewise judged necessary to fit out a Man of War to the Coast of *Africa*, under the Command of Captain *Holmes*. But neither the one nor the other of these Steps had the desired Effect: For in *Holland* the States started so many Difficulties, and made such Delays, that no Satisfaction could be obtained for any past Injuries. And as to Affairs in *Africa*, as soon as they had Advice that Captain *Holmes*



*Holmes* had by Assault taken, and possessed himself of a *Fort* near *Cape de Verde*, belonging to their *West-India Company*, they made all imaginable Preparations to fit out a *Squadron* for the *Coast of Africa*, to *retake* the said *Fort by Force of Arms*, notwithstanding his Majesty assured them, that he had given no Commission or Order to Captain *Holmes* for that Purpose, nor did know upon what Grounds he had proceeded to that Act of Hostility; that he expected him shortly at home, and that he would then proceed in a very strict Examination of his Proceedings, and would cause exemplary Justice to be done, as well in the redelivering the *Fort*, as in punishing the Person, if his Carriage and Demeanor deserved it: Which having no better Luck than the former Messages, in relation to Reparation for about TWENTY SHIPS taken from his Subjects on the *Coast of Guinea*; and the *Dutch Ambassador* telling his Majesty in plain Terms, That they had given Instructions to the Admiral of their Fleet, that was then going for *Guinea*, to take their *Fort* near *Cape Verde by Force*, and to take any English which had had a Hand in doing them Injury, his Majesty then found himself under a Necessity of fitting out a strong Squadron likewise for the same Parts, under the Command of Prince *Rupert*; which the States no sooner had notice of, but they alter'd their Language, and for avoiding the Effusion of Christian Blood, as they pretended, proposed that the Fleets on either Side might be detained within the Harbours, and not suffered to put to Sea, and that some

B                      Expedients

King Charles's  
Narrative to  
both Houses of  
Parliament,  
Nov. 24. 1664.



Expedients might be found out by Treaty for each other's Satisfaction : But in the mean Time that they were making this *plausible Offer*, they sent *secret Orders to their Fleet in the Streights, under the Command of De Ruyter, to make all possible Haste to Guinea, to execute all those Instructions, which they had given to their Fleet at home ;* which Orders he executed so rigorously, that he not only retook the *Fort near Cape de Verde*, and seized and confiscated all the English Ships that he could meet with, but also by the Assistance of the Natives of one of the adjacent Countries, who had been bribed by the Dutch General at *Elmina* for that purpose, he attacked and took the English Fort at *Cormantine*, and put a Dutch Garrison into the same.

SOME Time before this the PARLIAMENT had made an Enquiry into the *Obstructions and Incroachments of the Hollanders upon our Trade*, and into the *Losses* which our *Merchants* had sustain'd thereby, which they found to amount to the Value of *Seven or Eight hundred thousand Pounds* : And thereupon Both Houses came to this Resolution ;

April 21. 1664. *That the Wrongs, Dishonours, and Indignities, done to his Majesty by the Subjects of the United Provinces, by invading his RIGHTS in INDIA, AFRICA, and elsewhere, and the Damages, Affronts, and Injuries, done by them to our Merchants, were the greatest Obstructions of our Foreign Trade ; and that the same be humbly and speedily presented to His Majesty, and that he be most humbly moved to take some speedy and effectual Course for Redress thereof,*



*thereof, and all other of the like Nature, and for Prevention of the like in future, and that, in Prosecution thereof, they would, with their Lives and Fortunes, assist his Majesty against all Oppositions whatsoever.*

THIS Resolution being presented to his Majesty the Twenty seventh of *April*, 1664. he was thereupon pleased to renew his Instances with the States for the Satisfaction so long demanded, with more Vigour than ever; insomuch, that in an Audience of the Twenty fifth of *June* following, he told the *Dutch* Ambassador, *That it was not to be suffer'd, that the Dutch West-India Company, only by the means of a few Forts, and three or four Ships, should pretend to render the Coasts of Africa inaccessible to all others, by blocking up the Havens against their Commerce, and keeping them off, and driving them from every Place.* But the States turned a deaf Ear to all these Remonstrances: The Losses of our Merchants amounted to too great a Sum to be easily reimbursed, and the Advantages of the Trade to *Africa*, could they have wholly engross'd and secured the same to themselves, were too great and important to be willingly parted with: And therefore, instead of shewing any Inclination to give the requisite Satisfaction on either of those Heads, they chose to renew their *Attacks* upon the *English* in *Africa* with *more Resolution* than ever, under the Conduct of their Admiral *DeRuyter*, as aforesaid. And on the other hand, the King having tried all other Methods in vain, found himself obliged, upon the



first Notice of *De Ruyter's* Proceedings in *Africa*, to comply with the *Desires* of his *Parliament*, and with the *Voice* of his *People*; and accordingly, on the Twenty second Day of *February*, 1664-5. his Majesty declared *War* in Form against the *States General of the United Provinces*.

NOTHING is more evident, than that the chief View of the *Dutch* at this Time, and for some Years before, had been to exclude the *English* entirely from the Trade to *Africa*, and to engross the same wholly to themselves. And it is equally apparent, that the *Value* which they then set upon this Trade was such, that rather than consent that the *English* should enjoy a *Share* thereof peaceably and quietly, they made it their Choice to stand all the *Hazards*, and to bear all the *Inconveniencies* of a *War* with *England*. But however, Providence so order'd it, that the Event did not answer their Expectations: For in spite of all the Efforts of the *Dutch*, the *English Company* kept their Footing in *Africa*; and, by the Third Article of the Treaty of Peace concluded at *Breda*, Anno 1667. it was mutually agreed, that each Party should keep and enjoy all such *Lands*, *Islands*, *Towns*, *Fortresses*, *Places*, and *Colonies*, as during that *War*, or before, the one had by *Force of Arms*, or otherwise, taken from the other. And in virtue of this Article, the *Dutch West-India Company* kept Possession of the *English Fort* at *Cormantine*, and the *Royal African Company* kept Possession of the *Castle* at *Cabo Corso*, which they had (by the Assistance of Captain *Holmes*) retaken from



from the *Dutch* before the War began, and to which they had *an undoubted Right*.

BUT the Stipulations in this Treaty, in favour of the said *English Company*, were by no means sufficient to enable them to bear up against the *many Difficulties* they had to struggle with. They had found it extremely difficult to persuade People to come in at first, and be concerned with them in *so precarious and hazardous a Trade*; by which means their *Stock* was much too small for such an Undertaking: They had been obliged to be at great Charges in *Africa*, and they had met with many severe *Losses* by *Captures*, and *otherwise* at *Sea*, during the *War*; and, for Want of a sufficient *Stock* to begin with, they had contracted a large Debt at home: And under these Circumstances they were so far from being able to carry on and improve their *Trade*, or to make any new *Acquisitions*, that it was with the utmost Difficulty that they could keep and preserve those Places which they had still in their Possession. For extricating themselves therefore out of these and the like Difficulties, as well as for opening a Way for others to undertake the *Care, Management, and Improvement* of so *valuable a Trade* with more Success, they consented and agreed, for and in consideration of a certain Sum of Money, which was to be paid unto them by another *new Company*, then intended to be established, to *surrender their Charter* to the *Crown*, and to assign and transfer all their *Estate, Property, Interest, and Effects* in *Africa*, and *elsewhere*, unto the said *new Company*.

HIS



HIS Majesty likewise approving of this, as the most proper Expedient, as well for doing Justice to the *Company of Royal Adventurers*, as for the better preserving and enlarging the Trade to Africa, was thereupon pleased to accept of the said *Surrender*, and by his *Letters Patents* under the Great Seal of England, bearing Date the 27th Day of September, 1672. to establish and incorporate the present ROYAL AFRICAN COMPANY OF ENGLAND; and to give and grant unto them, all and singular, the *Lands, Countries, Havens, Roads, Rivers, and other Places in Africa*, from the *Port of Sally*, in *South Barbary*, to the *Cape of Good-Hope*, for and during the Term of *One thousand Years*, with the sole, intire, and only Trade and Traffick into and from the said Countries and Places, with Prohibition to all others his Subjects, to visit or frequent the same, without the Licence and Consent of the said Company: And also, with such other Powers and Priviledges, as were then judg'd proper and necessary, for enabling and encouraging them to undertake and accomplish so hazardous and chargeable a Work.

HEREUPON the New Company provided proper Books to take Subscriptions in, and kept them open for near *Twelve Months*, and invited all his Majesty's Subjects that pleased to become *Adventurers* with them, and to subscribe for what Sums they thought fit, towards raising a sufficient Joint-Stock for retrieving the said Trade out of the dangerous and precarious Condition it was then in, and for the



*the better securing and enlarging the same for the future.* But so backward and fearful were *Merchants* and *others*, at this Time, to be concern'd therein, that all the *Subscriptions* they could get from *all Parts of the Kingdom* amounted only to the Sum of 111,100 *l.*

WITH this STOCK however, *small as it was*, *this Company* apply'd themselves with all possible Vigour, to pursue the Ends of their Establishment. At this Time the *Dutch West-India Company* were in Possession of the strong Fortrefs of ST. GEORGE DEL MINA, and of the *English Fort* at *Cormantine*, then called *Fort Amsterdam*; and they had likewise another, called *Fort St. Anthony* at *Axim*; another, called *Fort St. Sebastian* on the River *Chamah*; a *Fifth*, called *Fort Nassau*, at a Place called *Mouree*, about two Leagues to the Leeward of *Cape-Coast*; a *Sixth*, called *Creveceur*, at *Acra*; and a *Seventh*, called *Fort Conraadsburg*, at *St. Jago*, within Cannon-Shot of *St. George Del Mina*; all on the *Gold Coast*, and lying very commodious to succour and assist one another in any Case of Need: The *Danes* were in Possession of *one* small, but *impregnable* Fort, (since called *Fort Royal*,) on the Top of a Hill, within Gun-Shot of *Cape Coast*; and of another at *Acra*, to the Eastward of the *Dutch Fort* at the same Place. The *Electors of Brandenburg* (now *King of Prussia*) had *one* good *Fort*, at *Cape Three-Points*, and *two smaller ones* at some little Distance to the Eastward of the same: And the



the *New English Company* were in Possession of one small Fort at *Cabo Corso*, that being the only Fort on all this Coast, which the *Dutch* had not dispossess'd the former Company of, during the late War. The first Thing therefore, which this Company found most necessary to be done was, to endeavour by all lawful ways and means to strengthen themselves, as much as possible, on this Coast, as other Nations, and especially the *Dutch*, had done before them. And for this Purpose, they enlarged Cape-Coast Castle, and made it six Times larger, stronger, and more commodious than before : They built one Fort at *Acra*, another at *Dixcove*, a Third at *Winnebah*, a Fourth at *Succundee*, a Fifth at *Commenda*, and rebuilt a Sixth at *Anamaboe*, all on the Gold Coast, and three of them within Musket-Shot of Dutch Forts ; and they likewise purchased *Fredericksburg*, now FORT-ROYAL, of the *Danes*, without which Cape-Coast Castle could not be safe : And they also built another Fort from the Ground at *Whydah*, for the Security of the *Negroe Trade* at that Place. And although in the Prosecution of these Works, the said Company met with all possible Opposition from the Dutch West-India Company on the Gold Coast, which often broke out into open Hostilities, and many Times ended not without Blood-shed on both Sides ; and the Company were put to an incredible Charge and Expence in purchasing the Consent and Assistance of the Natives, for making such Settlements, as well as for Transporting, from Time to Time, the necessary Supplies of



of *Soldiers, Artificers, Provisions*, and all other *Necessaries* and *Materials* from *England* for such *Buildings*; all which were render'd still more difficult, chargeable, and hazardous, by the *long War* which ensued with *France*: Yet nevertheless the said *Company* never ceased their Care and Endeavours for the *Service of their Country*, till they had compleatly finish'd their said Undertakings, and thereby put the *English Interest, on this Part of the Coast of Africa, on an equal Foot with the Dutch, and much superior to that of any other Nation whatsoever*. All which they effected during the *short Time* that they were permitted to enjoy the *Privileges* granted them by their *Charter*.

ON the *North Coast*, where it was natural to think the *Company* should have met with less Opposition, and more Success, Matters did not succeed altogether to their Wishes. *The Dutch West-India Company* were in Possession of the *Forts of Arguin* and *Goree*; the *French Senegal Company* (which was established *Anno 1673.*) were in Possession of a *small Fort* on an *Island* within the Bar, in the *River Senegal*; and the *Royal African Company of England* had *one small Fort* in the *River Gambia*, and another Settlement in the *River Sierraleon*. And in this Situation Affairs continued 'till about the Year 1677. and the *Companies of each Nation* traded freely to all *Places on the open Coast*, (not in the actual Possession of any of the others,) from *Cape Blanco* to *Cape Mount*.



IN the Year 1677, and 1678. the *French* took the *Dutch Forts* on the Islands of *Arguin* and *Goree*, which soon after were yielded to *France* by the *Treaty of Nemiguen*: And in the Year 1685 the *French King*, judging the Grant to the *Senegal Company*, which extended from *Cape Blanco* to the *Cape of Good-Hope*, too large, restrained that Company to that Part of the Coast, which extends from *Cape Blanco* to the River *Sierraleon*, and erected another Company, which was called the *Guinea Company*, and gave and granted unto them, the sole Trade to and from all that Part of the Coast, which extends from the River *Sierraleon* to the *Cape of Good-Hope*. And from this Time the *French Trade* to *Africa* was managed and carried on by those two distinct Companies.

THE last of these Companies made no great Progress in their Trade, 'till about the Year 1702. that the *French King* gave them the *Contract*, which he had made with *Spain*, for introducing a certain Number of Negroes yearly into the *Spanish West-Indies*. But that *Contract* being afterwards transferred to *Great Britain*, by the *Treaty of Utrecht*, the said Company was soon after abolish'd, and the Trade to *Africa*, within their *Limits*, laid open to all the Subjects of *France*; in which Condition it continued from the Year 1716, to 1720. and no longer.

As for the *Senegal Company*, they were scarcely warm in their new Possessions, before they set up a Claim to all that Part of the Coast, which extends from *Cape Blanco* to the River *Gambia*, comprehending



ing above *five hundred Miles* in Length. In the Year 1681. they would fain have *hinder'd the Royal African Company of England's Ships from trading all along that Coast*; But not being as yet in a Condition to contest that Point with them, they dropp'd their Pretentions against them for that Time. In the Years 1683, 1684, and 1685. they *seiz'd and confiscated* several Ships belonging to the *Portuguese, Dutch, and Prussians*. And in the last of those Years, they renew'd their Claim against the *Royal African Company*: From which Time they continued to give them frequent Interruptions in their Trade, 'till at last a War broke out between the two Nations, which, together with the Difficulties the Company fell under at Home soon after, put it in a manner wholly out of their Power to assert and maintain their *own* and their *Country's Rights* against such *Encroachments*, as otherwise they might and would undoubtedly have done.

THE Losses and Damages which the Company sustained, during the Course of this War, were more and greater than can be easily imagin'd. But one of the chiefest was the Loss of their *Fort* in the River *Gambia*, Anno 1695. which by the Negligence of their Servants, making no Defence, was taken and plunder'd by a Squadron of *French Men of War*, and all the Fortifications demolish'd and razed to the Ground. And, as a farther Addition to this Misfortune, when the Company came to take Possession thereof again, after the Peace, they found



the *French* settled in the River, and claiming an equal Share of the Trade thereof with themselves.

IN the Year 1697. the *Parliament* having taken the Trade to *Africa* into their Consideration, thought fit, as a further Means of enlarging and improving the same, to lay the said Trade open to all his Majesty's Subjects for *Thirteen Years*, and from thence to the End of the next Session of *Parliament*; and in regard that the *Royal African Company of England* had been at the Charge of building and maintaining a considerable Number of *Forts* and *Castles* on the said Coast, which the *Parliament* likewise judged necessary to be kept up and maintain'd in future, for the Preservation and better carrying on the said Trade, they were further pleased to impose a *Duty of Ten per Cent. ad Valorem*, on all Goods and Merchandize exported to *Africa*, during the said Term, to be answer'd and paid to the said Company for enabling them to keep and maintain their said *Forts* and *Castles*.

THIS Act continued in Force from the 24th of *June* 1698. to the 24th of *June* 1712. in which Time the Charges which the Company were at, in maintaining their said *Forts* and *Castles* amounted, at a Medium, to about 20,000 *l. per Annum*; and in fourteen Years to 280,000 *l.* in the Whole. The *Duty* which the *separate Traders* paid in the same Time, amounted in the whole to 73,785 *l.* 10 *s.* 6 *d.*  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and no more; and *Ten per Cent.* upon the Company's own Exports for the same Time, amounted to the Sum of



of 36,387 *l.* 13 *s.* 1 *d.*  $\frac{1}{2}$ . From whence it appears, that even while that Act continued in Force, the *Total* of the *Ten per Cent.* Duty, came very much short of half the Charges and Expences, which the Company were at in keeping and maintaining their said *Forts* and *Castles*.

SINCE the Expiration of this Act, in 1712. to this Day, which is seventeen Years and upwards, all others his Majesty's Subjects have traded as *freely* and *openly* to all Parts of *Africa*, as they did or might do, under the Authority of the said Act; and the said Company have, at *their own sole Cost and Charge*, born and defrayed the Charges and Expences of keeping and maintaining their said *Forts* and *Castles*, which, at a very moderate Computation, has amounted to above 250,000 *l.* By which means, and by the extravagant Rise in the Prices of Negroes at *Anamaboe*, and other Places on the Coast, and by the *Decay* of the *Gold Trade* which has ensued thereupon, the Proprietors of the Company here at home, have for many Years past been obliged, either to raise fundry great Sums of Money, for keeping and maintaining their said *Forts* and *Castles*, without receiving any Profit from the Trade in return for the same, or to run the Risque not only of losing all the Money, which they have from Time to Time raised and expended for supporting their own *Property*, but of becoming *Accessaries* to the *intire Loss* of the *Trade to Africa*, and consequently to the *utter Ruin* of all our *Colonies* and *Plantations* in *America*, by *relinquishing and abandoning*



*doing their said Forts and Castles, to be seized and possessed by such Foreign Nations, as have been long watching for an Opportunity to get them into their Hands.*

THIS being the Case with regard to the *Company*, and it being the *Sense* of the *Nation*, that the *Trade* to *Africa* should continue *free* and *open* to all his Majesty's Subjects, the only Thing that remains to be consider'd, is, *Whether, or no, Forts and Castles are necessary to be kept up and maintained, for the Preservation of the said Trade to this Kingdom? And if they are necessary to be kept up and maintained for that Purpose, who, upon the Foot of an open Trade, ought in Justice and Reason to bear and defray the Charges of them?*

THAT it is absolutely necessary, that *Forts and Castles should be kept up and maintained in Africa*, the *Company* apprehend will appear from these *Considerations* :

FOR two hundred and fifty Years past, it has been the *constant* POLICY of all such *European Nations*, as have been so fortunate as to make any *new Discoveries*, and to gain any *establish'd Power* and *Authority* in *remote* and *Barbarous Countries*, to build and maintain *Forts and Castles*; and in virtue of such *Possessions*, to *claim a Right to whole Kingdoms*, and to *Traets of Land* of a vast Extent, and to EXCLUDE all other *Nations* from trading in, to, or from them.

By this Method, the *Portuguese* long enjoyed the *whole Trade* to *Africa*, and to the *East Indies*.

By



By this Method, the *Spaniards* for many Years *claimed* and *engrossed* almost the whole Continent of *America*, and most of the *Islands* near adjacent thereto, to themselves.

By this Method, the *Hollanders* have render'd themselves absolute Masters of all those *Islands* in the *East*, which produce *Cinnamon*, *Cloves*, *Nutmegs*, and *Mace*, and from them supply the *whole World* with those Commodities, by such *Quantities*, and at such *Prices* as they think fit.

By this Method, the *same People*, for some Time before and after the Year 1660, attempted to gain the *whole* and *intire Possession* of the most *valuable* Parts of the Coast of *Africa*, and to EXCLUDE this *Nation* from any Part, Share, or Interest therein; and thereby brought upon themselves a War with this Kingdom in 1664.

BEFORE the *Royal African Company* had built a *sufficient Number* of *Forts* and *Castles* on the *Gold Coast*, the *Dutch* interrupted our *Trade*, and seized and confiscated our *Ships* on the said Coast, and within its *Dependencies*, which, as they pretend, extend from *Cape Palmas* to *Cape Lopez*, and contains a Tract of Land of above 1200 Miles. Since the *Royal African Company* have built and maintained a *sufficient Number* of *Forts* and *Castles* on the *Gold Coast*, the said Company, and all other *British Ships* and *Vessels*, have traded *freely* to the said Coast, and to *all Places* dependent thereon; without the least *Interruption* or *Molestation* from the *Dutch*, or any other Nation:

BEFORE



BEEFORE the *French* got Possession of the *Forts* in the *River Senegal*, and on the *Islands of Arguin* and *Goree*, on the *North Coast*, the *English* traded freely and openly to all Places on the said Coast, without any Let or Molestation. Since the *French* have been in Possession of those *Forts*, they have taken upon themselves to EXCLUDE the *British Nation* from those Parts, and do now actually take and confiscate all such *British Ships and Vessels* as venture to go thither.

IN those Places where the *Royal African Company* have *Forts*, as in the *River Gambia*, the *British* separate Traders trade freely with the Natives. In those Places where other Nations have *Forts* and *Castles*, and the *Royal African Company* have none, there all *British private Traders* are either absolutely denied the Liberty of Trading, or their *Ships* are actually taken and confiscated.

FOR the better supporting of *Forts* and *Castles* in *Africa*, his Most Christian Majesty has not only given and granted unto the *India Company of Paris* the whole and sole Trade of that Coast, from *Cape Blanco* to the *Cape of Good-Hope*, but likewise allows them the following great and extraordinary Privileges and Encouragements, viz. An Exemption from all Duties for Merchandize exported to *Africa* and to the *French Islands and Colonies in America*: An Exemption from half the Customs of all Goods and Merchandize imported from *Africa*; and from half the Customs on all Sugars, and other Merchandize, imported from the *French Islands and Colonies*  
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*in America, being the Produce of the Sale of Negroes there : An Exemption from all Tolls of any Kind upon their Goods and Merchandize in France : A Bounty of thirteen Livres to be paid out of his own Revenue for every Negroe carried to the French Islands and Colonies in America : And, lastly, A Bounty of twenty Livres for every eight Ounces of Gold Dust which they shall bring into France.*

IN like manner, the *States General* of the *United Provinces*, for the better enabling their *West-India Company* to keep and maintain their *Forts* and *Castles* in *Africa*, have not only given and granted unto the said Company the *whole* and *sole Trade* of *Africa*, from the *Tropick of Cancer* to the *Cape of Good Hope*, but do likewise *pay* and *allow* unto them the following extraordinary *Aids* and *Incomes*, viz. *From the several Provinces of North Holland, Zeland, and Groningen, a Subsidy of 38,000 Florins per Annum: A Duty of Three per Cent. on all Goods and Merchandize exported to, or imported from any Place between Newfoundland and Cape Florida: A Duty of Two per Cent. on all Goods and Merchandize exported to, or imported from any Place on the Continent of America, from Cape Florida to the River Oronoco, including Curaffo; both which are computed to amount to 100,000 Florins per Annum: A Duty of five Guilders per Last on all Ships trading to Cuba, Hispaniola, Jamaica, Porto Rico, and other Caribbee Islands, or to any Place from the River Oronoco to the Streights of Magellan and La Maire, and from thence to the Streights of Aman, computed at 3000 Florins per*

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Annum:



Annum: *One third Part of the neat Income of the Colony at Surinam, computed at 10,000 Florins per Annum: The clear Profits of the Colony of Ifacape, computed at 20,000 Florins per Annum; and all the Profits arising from the Captures, and Licences which they are authorized to make upon, or to grant to such Portuguese Ships, as come upon the Coast from Lisbon or Brasil for Negroes, valued at 100,000 Florins per Annum, making in the Whole 271,600 Florins, or about 25,000 l. Sterling per Annum, communibus annis.*

Now, as it is evident, that the *Recovery* of this *Trade* out of the *dangerous* and *precarious State* and *Condition* to which it was reduced about the Year 1660, is *wholly* and *solely* owing to the *Care* which the *Company* took, and to the *vast Charge* and *Expence* which they were at *for many Years* together, in *building* and *maintaining* a proper Number of *Forts* and *Castles* on the Coast of *Africa*, the said *Company* do likewise apprehend that there is no Man, if he will give himself the Trouble to consider these Facts fairly, and to reason justly upon them, but must own, that *the Safety and Preservation of our Trade to Africa, against the Pretensions and Encroachments of such Nations, as are strongly settled in those Parts, depends absolutely upon our keeping up and maintaining the said Company's Forts and Castles on the same Coast, in a defensible Condition.*

THIS Point, therefore, being thus established upon the strongest Evidence that Matters of this Nature are capable of, the next Thing that remains to be consider'd, is; Since *Forts* and *Castles* on the Coast of  
Africa



*Africa* are absolutely necessary for the Preservation of that *Trade* to this Kingdom, and since it is the *Sense* of the *Nation* that the said *Trade* should be left *free* and *open* to all his Majesty's Subjects; who shall or ought to be at the Charge of keeping and maintaining such *Forts* and *Castles* in future? the *Company* alone? the *Company* and the *private Traders* to *Africa* together? or the *Publick*? For if they are to be kept and maintained at all, it is evident that the Charge must be born and defrayed by one or other of these.

WHILE the *Company* enjoyed the whole and sole Trade to *Africa*, they purchased, built, and maintain'd their said *Forts* and *Castles* at their own *sole* Cost and Charge, and have thereby acquir'd an undoubted *Right* and *Property* in and to them. The Charges of keeping them from the Year 1672. to the Year 1698. could not be less than 15,000 *l. per Annum*, which in twenty six Years amounts to the Sum of 390,000 *l.* The Charges for the next fourteen Years, *viz.* from 1698, to 1712. at 20,000 *l. per Annum*, (deducting the Amount of the Duty which the *separate Traders* paid in the same Time,) came to about 206,000 *l.* And the Charges, which the *Company* have been at on the same Account for seventeen Years last past, reckoning but 15,000 *l. per Annum*, comes to 255,000 *l.* which three Sums make together the Sum of 851,000 *l.* And so much at least has the *Company* expended in keeping and maintaining their said *Forts* and *Castles* since the *Commencement* of their *Charter*; and that, exclusive of many other necessary Articles of Expence, which might be brought in, if they had a



mind to swell the Account. Now although the *Company* did willingly and chearfully bear the Expence of the *first Period*, because nothing had been done by *publick Authority* in all that Time, to deprive them of any of their Privileges, although they continued to keep and support their said *Forts* and *Castles* for the next succeeding fourteen Years, in hopes that the Duty of *Ten per Cent.* upon their own and the *separate Traders Exports* to *Africa* would have fully defrayed that Charge, as the *Parliament* undoubtedly intended it should; and altho' the *Company*, for the *Preservation* of their own *Property*, as well as for the *Protection* of the *Trade*, have continued to keep up and maintain their said *Forts* and *Castles* for seventeen Years past, at their own *sole Cost and Charge*, whereby they have expended in the Service of their Country above 250,000 *l.* yet surely no Man will pretend to say, That the *Company* should now be *forced* to part with their *Property* in their said *Forts* and *Castles*, without a Consideration suitable and proportionable to those great Sums of Money which they have expended in purchasing, erecting, and maintaining them; or, That while the Trade to *Africa* remains *free* and *open* to all others his Majesty's Subjects, the *Company* should be obliged to keep and maintain the said *Forts* and *Castles* at their own sole Cost and Charge. These are Notions so contrary, so diametrically opposite to the *sovereign and immutable Laws of Justice and Equity*, that whatever some few particular Persons may imagine, the *Company* are sure, they will  
never



never meet with the least Encouragement amongst the *honest* and *impartial* Part of *Mankind*.

As for the *Company* and the *separate Traders* contributing to this *Expence*, in proportion to the Value of their several and respective *Exports* to *Africa*, it must be confessed, that it is a common Maxim, That every Trade ought to bear its own Burden. But the *Company* apprehend, and they believe the *separate Traders*, how much soever they may pretend to differ with them in other Points, will concur with them in this, That this Maxim is not always and universally true, or that it wants a more particular Explanation. When the Trade to *Africa* was laid open, in the Year 1698. the Prices of Negroes on the Coast were incomparably lower, and the Demand for them by other Nations, as well as our own, not near so great as now; And then possibly the Trade might afford to pay a Duty for this Purpose, and those concerned might get a reasonable Profit for themselves: And while the Trade continued upon this Foot, it might well enough bear its own Burden; because there was still sufficient Encouragement left for Merchants to venture their Estates therein. But the Circumstances of this Trade are so much alter'd since, by the great Advance in the Price of Negroes on the Coast, and by the Increase of the Demand for them by this, as well as other Nations, that it is very much to be doubted, whether the most frugal Trader to *Africa* can pretend with any Certainty to clear *Six per Cent.* upon the *Out-Sets* of any *Negroe Voyage*; and therefore  
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the *Company* apprehend, that to lay any Duty or Burden on such a Trade, cannot be warranted by the general Maxim ; because such a Duty would in Effect amount to a *Prohibition of the Trade*, and consequently would destroy the very *End* for which it was given : Besides, when other Nations are giving all possible Encouragement to their Subjects to furnish their *Plantations* plentifully with *Negroes*, it is not to be imagined that this Nation will consent to lay any *Discouragement* on those, who are to furnish ours with the same Commodity.

BUT if it be considered, that when we say that every Trade ought to bear its own Burden, the true and genuine Meaning thereof can be no other but this ; That all those who partake of the Benefits and Advantages of any Trade, ought to contribute to such Charges, as are absolutely necessary for the *Preservation* of the *Whole* ; the *Maxim* must be allow'd to carry great Force and Weight with it. But then the *Company* conceive it will only affect *themselves* and the *separate Traders*, as a Part of a *much greater* and more *considerable Body* : For, if it be considered, that the *Safety* and *Preservation* of the *Trade to Africa*, depends upon our keeping up and maintaining a certain Number of *Forts* and *Castles*, in proportion to the *Power* of such other *Rival Nations*, as are *strongly settled* in the same Parts ; If the *Preservation* and *Improvement* of all our *Colonies* and *Plantations* in *America* depends upon the *Preservation* of the *Trade to Africa* ; as they are supplied with *Negroes* from thence, without which they  
could



could raise neither *Sugar*, nor *Tobacco*, nor *Indigo*, nor *Rice*, nor *Cotton*, nor *Ginger*, nor any other Commodities of the Growth of those Colonies; If upon the *Preservation* and *Improvement* of the *Trade* to *Africa* and the *West-Indies*, the *Consumption* of above *one Half* of our *Manufactures*, and the *Employment* of above *one Half* of our *Shipping* and *Navigation*, intirely depends; If the *Value* of *Lands* in *Britain* do, and always must rise and fall in proportion as our *Manufactures* and *Navigation* are encouraged or discouraged; And if the *Customs*, and other *Publick Revenues* must increase or decrease, as the *Trade* to *Africa*, and the *Plantations* is better or worse protected and supported; In a Word, if there be any Truth or Weight in these and the like Considerations, it is then evident, that *there is not a Man in this Kingdom, from the highest to the lowest, who does not more or less partake of the Benefits and Advantages of the Royal African Company's FORTS and CASTLES in Africa; and who would not be a Sufferer or Loser, in Proportion to his Rank and Circumstances, should the said FORTS and CASTLES be abandon'd, or come under the Power, or fall into the Hands of any Foreign Nation.* And if so, it is then submitted, Whether, according to the Maxim above mention'd, *the African Company alone, or the Separate Traders alone, or both together, or whether the Publick, that is, the whole Body of the People of this Realm, ought to bear and contribute to the necessary Charges, and Expences of the said Forts and Castles?*

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THE Resolution of these Questions is so plain and obvious, that it were only to mispend Time, to say, which ought to bear this Expence. The only Objection of any Weight that has been made to it, is, that there is no *Precedent* for the *Publick's* making any *Allowance* for the *Support* and *Preservation* of any *Trade*. But the Answer to this is easy : For, were it really so, that there never was a *Precedent* for such an *Allowance* from the *Publick* ; it is likewise certain, *that there never was a Case parallel to this of the African Company* : And *new* and *extraordinary Cases* are always allow'd to be *sufficient Warrants* for setting *new* *Precedents* for Posterity. But, if *Precedents* are the only Things wanting to induce the *Publick* to come into such an *Allowance*, it is conceived that *several such* may be easily produced. *Jamaica*, the *Leeward-Islands*, *New-York*, *Bermudas*, and *Providence*, are settled and established Governments ; they have Power to *raise Money within themselves* for their own Protection and Defence, and some of them are very able to do it, and yet so good and indulgent is the *Government* to them, that the *Parliament* grants fundry *considerable Sums* every Year for their *Encouragement* and *Protection*. The Garrisons at *Annapolis Royal* and *Placentia* are kept for the Protection of *New England* and the *Fisheries* ; and yet they are kept at the *Publick Charge*, and the *Parliament* grants *Money* every Year for those Services. *Gibraltar* and *Port Mahon* are kept for the Security and Protection of our *Trade* in the *Mediterranean*



*diterranean*; and the *Parliament* grants *large Sums* every Year for their Maintenance and Support, without obliging any of the Merchants trading to those Parts to pay or contribute any Thing thereto. If *Precedents* therefore are of any Use in this Case, the *Company* apprehend that these are strong in their Favour: For, if the *Government* thinks fit to be at an Expence for the Protection of several *particular Colonies*, then much more may the *Company* hope for the like Indulgence, for the Preservation of a *Trade*, upon which *the Welfare and Prosperity of all his Majesty's Colonies and Plantations in America* does in so great a Measure depend. If the *Parliament* thinks fit to be at a very great annual Expence for keeping *Gibraltar* and *Port Mahon*, for the Protection of our *Trade* in the *Mediterranean*, then much more may the *Company* hope to be indulged with a small Allowance, for the Preservation of the *Trade* to *Africa*, upon which more depends, than upon all the other Branches of our *Foreign Trade* put together.

To conclude:

THE *Company's Forts* and *Castles* on the Coast of *Africa*, were either *purchased* or *built with their own Money*, and they have been in the quiet Possession of them for a great Number of Years. They have therefore an *undoubted Right* and *Property* in them.

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THE Question then is:

ARE *these* FORTS and CASTLES NECESSARY for the Preservation of the Trade to Africa to this KINGDOM? Or, are they NOT?

IF they are NECESSARY, as the PARLIAMENT has declared formerly, and as the Honourable HOUSE OF COMMONS have VOTED more than once, the Company hope they may be intitled to some Relief and Assistance from the PUBLICK, for enabling them to keep and maintain them in a defensible Condition, for the Benefit and Protection of the Trade in general.

BUT, if contrary to all the Reasons and Arguments alledged before, for the NECESSITY of FORTS and CASTLES, it shall be judged, that they are NO LONGER NECESSARY; and that NO DAMAGE can accrue to the TRADE, or to the PUBLICK, by their not being kept up and maintained, it is then submitted, how, and in what Manner the Company may dispose of them?

F I N I S.